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ABSTRACT

Data were collected throughout the 1989-90 school year at St. Cloud State University (Minnesota) to investigate whether or not Teacher Perceiver Screeners and/or Preprofessional Skills Tests (PPST) could be used to predict success in student teaching. Results indicated that the Teacher Perceiver Screener showed promise for use in predicting student teachers' abilities to motivate and communicate with students and to apply their skills in using specific teaching methods in classrooms. Some PPST scores seemed to be useful for predicting prospective teachers' abilities to control and communicate with students and to apply specific teaching methods when combined with portions of the screener. Further research is recommended. (JD)

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Predicting Success in Student Teacher From Teacher Perceiver Screeners and Pre-Professional Skills Tests

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Encouraged by results obtained in a pilot study conducted in 1981, data was collected throughout the 1989-90 school year to investigate whether or not Teacher Perceiver Screeners and/or Pre-Professional Skills Tests could be used to predict success in student teaching. Specific questions that were asked include:

1. Are there relationships between personal characteristics, basic skills and student teaching performance?

2. Can specific measures of personal characteristics and basic skills, or a combination of them, be used to predict student teaching performance?

Although all St. Cloud State University students who student taught during the 1989-90 school year were encouraged to be involved, participating in the research was Perceiver Screener prior to student teaching and PPST scores were obtained from their files. At the end of each quarter, supervising teachers and university supervisors were asked to independently evaluate student teachers participating in the study, using an adapted form of The Purdue Teacher Evaluation Scale. By the end of the year, sixty three complete sets of data had been collected.

Chi-square and step-wise multiple regression equations were computed, using total scores as well as subscales of each instrument. Detailed descriptions of each instrument is included at the end of this paper.

Results

In response to the first question, relationships between Perceiver Screener scores and supervising teachers' ratings were significant at the .0625 level and university supervisors' ratings at the .0611 level. (See Table I) No one scoring below four on the Perceiver Screener was given high ratings by university supervisors or supervising teachers. Conversely, no one who scored 9 or above on the Perceiver Screener received low ratings by university supervisors or supervising teachers. In fact, out of five possible categories, all but one of the 9+ students received one of the two top ratings. That student was given an average rating by the supervising teacher.

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Table I.

Relationships Between Screener and Performance Scores

Chi-Squares	D.F.	Significance	Rater
11.978	6	.0625	Supv. Teacher
14.901	8	.0611	Univ. Supv.

The PPST writing scores and university supervisors' performance evaluations showed a significant relationship at the .0061 level. (See Table II) A Total of the three PPST subscores and university supervisors' ratings approached significance at .2369.

Table II.

Relationships Between Writing and Performance Scores

Chi-Square	D.F.	Significance	Rater
21.419	8	.0061	Univ. Supv.

In response to the second question, the Perceiver Screener emerged as the best predictor of a student teacher's ability to motivate students as they were rated by their supervising teachers, significant at the .0019 level. According to university supervisors' ratings, the interpersonal portion of the Screener was the best predictor for elementary student teachers, significant at the .0020 level. (See Table III)

When students were rated according to their abilities to control students, the best predictor of supervising teachers' ratings was the total PPST score, stronger in spring than fall or winter quarters, significant at the .0135 level. (See Table III) University supervisors' ratings of student teachers' abilities to control students could not be predicted.

Supervising teachers' ratings of student teachers' performances in communicating with students were best predicted from a combination of their reading scores and the extrapersonal portion of the Perceiver Screener, significant at the .0045 level. (See Table III) Again, university supervisors' ratings could not be predicted.

Finally, math scores and the intrapersonal portion of their Perceiver Screeners were the strongest predictors of supervising teachers' ratings of student teachers' teaching methods, significant at the .0080 level. (See Table III)

Table III.

Regression Equations Predicting Student Teacher Performance

Performance Raters	Constant	Adjusted Variable	Standard R	Error	F	Significance
1-Supv. Tchr.	38.763	Screener	.133	5.187	10.545	.002
1-Univ. Supv.	47.553	Interpers. & Level (Elem.)	.164	4.633	7.061	.002
2-Supv. Tchrs.	67.667	PPST & Quarter (Fall)	.105	3.956	4.626	.014
4-Supv. Tchrs.	26.505	Reading & Extrapers.	.137	3.502	5.923	.005
5-Supv. Tchrs.	49.667	Intrapers. & Math	.120	2.739	5.234	.008

1 = Ability to Motivate Students
2 = Ability to Control Students
4 = Teacher/Student Communication
5 = Teaching Methods

Implications and Recommendations

Based on results obtained from this research, the Teacher Perceiver Screener seems to show promise for use in predicting student teachers' abilities to motivate students as well as communicate with them and in using specific teaching methods in classrooms. Similarly, some of the PPST scores also seem to be useful for predicting their abilities to control students, communicate with them and in applying specific teaching methods when combined with portions of the Screener. However, these trends must be viewed with caution for several reasons.

For instance, specific behaviors identified in the evaluation instrument need to be examined to determine whether or not those are teacher behaviors a program wants to encourage and nourish. Second, because participants in this study were volunteers, one must consider the probability of a skewed sample. The weakest student teachers may not have been included in the study. Third, the diversity in university supervisors' ratings needs to be studied thoroughly in hopes of obtaining more consistency.

This researcher recommends that the university administer the Teacher Perceiver Screener along with PPST tests to all teacher education students for further study. She further recommends a follow-up study of the sixty three participants to find out what happens to them as they enter the profession. Finally, she recommends further examination of the evaluation instrument and rating patterns that emerged in this study.